



"Happiness comes only when we push our brains and hearts to the farthest reaches of which we are capable." ~ Leo C. Rosten

Happy February to all!

In January, I presented six personal goals to help you get a new start on new - or renewed – habits:

- Practice optimism and stay positive through set backs and constant change.
- Recognize and take early steps to avoid getting pulled down by uncertainty, organizational change, or negative stress and energy.
- Use technology as an enabling tool, don't let it drive you. Don't confuse information (such as e-mail) with communication (having conversations). Beware of the differences and use the right approach for each situation.
- Align and play to your strengths. Explore and know your strengths to assure you're in the right career/assignment/project to consistently bring out your best.
- Build connections, networks, and your personal brand. Make continual deposits in your relationship bank accounts to influence change, strengthen teamwork, and grow your support systems.
- Keep yourself growing through continuous personal improvement. Recognize the signs of career/personal stagnation and strengthening habits of personal growth.

As a way to continually review and practice our cabinet goals (Employer of Choice, One Employer, Customer Value, and Learning & Development Culture) and turn them from strategy into action is to strengthen our cabinet capabilities. We need to focus on our intangible assets such as top-notch leadership, a high-performance culture, and innovation expertise—all that directly support our strategy.

When we define our capabilities, it reflects what our workforce's collective talents are. What are these talents? How do we define them? How do we maximize them? A variety of capabilities exists, but to excel, we only need to select and master the essential few that enable us to accomplish our goals – our strategy.

The below Harvard Business Review article helps to identify specific capabilities most crucial to any organization's strategy. It also describes techniques--capabilities audits and the Balanced Scorecard tools--to assess your performance on each. The authors, Ulrich and Smallwood show how to conduct a "capabilities audit" in order to identify existing strengths as well as areas urgently in need of improvement. The authors have identified 11 intangible assets that correlate strongly with strongly-admired and well-managed organizations: talent, speed, shared mind-set and coherent brand identity, accountability, collaboration, learning, leadership, customer connectivity, strategic unity, innovation, and efficiency. (*Please note that the expectation is not for*

an organization to excel in all 11 areas. Rather focus should be to select and master the essential few that enable an organization to accomplish goals – strategy.)

Capitalizing on Capabilities (Ulrich & Smallwood)

In this article, organizational capabilities and how leaders can evaluate them and build the ones needed to create intangible value are reviewed. In addition to taking the reader through the 11 organizational capabilities, the authors break down the audit process into five steps, then conclude by outlining 8 lessons learned: Get focused; recognize the interdependence of capabilities; learn from the best; create a virtuous circle of assessment and investment; compare capability perceptions; march capability with delivery; avoid underinvestment in organizational intangibles; and don't confuse capabilities with activities.

The eleven capabilities are characterized in the book are as follows:

1. **Talent**—The organization is good at attracting, motivating, and retaining talented people
2. **Speed**—The organization is good at making significant changes in a short period of time
3. **Shared Mind-Set and Coherent Brand Identity**—The organization is good at arranging for customers and employees to have consistently positive experiences with the organization
4. **Accountability**—The organization is good at making sure that the performance management and reward systems hold employees accountable and obtain high performance
5. **Collaboration**—The organization is good working across internal boundaries for the overall effectiveness of the organization
6. **Learning**—The organization is good at generating and generalizing significant new ideas
7. **Leadership**—The organization is good at consistently producing effective leaders
8. **Customer Connectivity**—The organization is good at building enduring relationships with targeted customers
9. **Strategic Unity**—The organization is good at articulating and sharing their strategic point of view among employees
10. **Innovation**—The organization is good at doing something new in both its products and its processes
11. **Efficiency**—The organization is good at managing its costs

To read the Harvard Business Review article and learn more on how to perform a capabilities audit, visit: <http://www.ignyte.ms/whitepapers/HBRCapitalizingOnCapabilities.pdf>

Other Resources:

ARTICLES:

HR Transformation: Building Human Resources from the Outside In (Dave Ulrich, Justin Allen, Wayne Brockbank, Jon Younger and Mark Nyman)

Book Summary: HR Transformation is a no-nonsense handbook offering a clear process and useful tools HR leaders and line managers can leverage to position their organizations for success. By accomplishing transformation, we envision HR continuing to be center stage as organizations face greater business changes than they have ever faced. We are advocates for the profession and the leaders who make it happen. We hope this work will help continue to make HR the essential source for strategic solutions. Line managers will learn what to expect from their HR investments. HR professionals learn how to meet those higher expectations.

To read the first chapter of this book, visit:

<http://s3.amazonaws.com/rb1ip/Books/HR%20Transformation/HR%20Transformation%20pages.pdf>

Unleashing Positivity in the Workplace (Ann Pace):

http://execed.bus.umich.edu/execdev/Includes/MEDIA/unleash_positivity-TandDMag-Jan10.pdf

(taken from <http://execed.bus.umich.edu/Programs/Positive-Leadership-Building-Extraordinary-Personal-Leadership-Capabilities.aspx>)

Breakthrough Leadership (Wayne Baker): <http://www.bus.umich.edu/Positive/POS-Research/TryingTimes/TryingtimesBreakthroughLeadership.htm>

PODCASTS:

ASTD Leadership / Training & Development Podcasts:

<http://www.astd.org/TD/TDpodcasts>

ASSESSMENT:

Change & Innovation Assessment:

http://www.repeto.com/display/survey.cfm?s_id=F1CEE790_1AE4_4C5E_BA0D04CCC9E3CE2B

Next month: **Finding Leadership Courage**

Yours in Service,

Sissy

Sissy Meredith, Ph.D.

Commissioner

Department of Human Resources Administration (DHRA)

KY Personnel Cabinet

(502) 564-6608

<http://personnel.ky.gov/persadmin/>

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